

Amendments to the Claims:

Please cancel Claims 1 through 4 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

Please add Claims 5 through 8 to read, as follows.

1. **(Canceled)**

2. **(Canceled)**

3. **(Canceled)**

4. **(Canceled)**

--5. **(New)** An image forming apparatus, comprising:

an image carrier;

charging means for charging said image carrier and toner on said image carrier;

electrostatic image forming means for forming an electrostatic image on said image carrier charged by said charging means;

developing means for electrostatically collecting the toner on said image carrier and for electrostatically developing the electrostatic image by using the toner to form a toner image;

bias applying means for applying a bias to said developing means;

transfer means for transferring the toner image on said image carrier onto a transfer medium; and

control means for executing variable-control of a potential difference between a potential of said image carrier charged by said charging means and the bias applied to said developing means, based on a ratio at which the toner image occupies an area relative to a predetermined area on said image carrier.

6. (New) An apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said control means controls the potential difference to be larger as the ratio is larger.

7. (New) An apparatus according to claim 6, further comprising a power source for supplying a bias to said charging means, wherein said control means executes variable-control of the bias applied to said charging means, according to the ratio.

8. (New) An apparatus according to claim 7, wherein the bias supplied to said charging means from said power source is a voltage obtained by superposing an AC voltage onto a DC voltage, and said control means controls the DC voltage according to the ratio.--